

# Human Relations News

from the

## MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON GROUP RELATIONS

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

LEO P. CARLIN, MAYOR

An official agency created by the Newark Fair Practice Ordinance to carry out the State policy against discrimination based on race, color, creed or national origin.

Room 214, City Hall, Newark, Mitchell 3-6300, Ext. 281

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A bi-monthly summary of facts and trends in human relations and civil rights

May 1958

### Dr. Don Dodson Conducts Film Forum on Housing

Dr. Don Dodson, director of the Center for Human Relations at New York University, led a discussion of two films at the special May meeting of the Mayor's Commission.

The first film, "Crisis in Levittown," gave the audience of 100 Newark citizens the unique opportunity of seeing Dr. Dodson as the moderator in the film questioning residents of Levittown, Pa. on their reactions to a Negro family moving into the community. The assembled group then had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Dodson in person and talking with him about the film.

"All the Way Home" depicted the conflicts and problems of a white upper middle class community divided over the thought that a Negro family might be moving into their neighborhood. Dr. Dodson with unusual warmth and understanding generated full audience participation in the discussion which followed both films. This public forum was a part of the education program of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations.

Organizations wishing to use these half hour films on discrimination in private housing may procure them through the Commission office by calling Mitchell 3-6300, Ext. 281.

### CLINTON HILL NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL HOLDS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The continued growth and future tasks of the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council were outlined at its 3rd annual conference at South Side High School on May 18.

Cash prizes totaling \$175.00 donated by leaders in Newark's business community were awarded to winners in the cleanup, fix-up campaigns by Robert W. Lockwood, president of the Newark Junior Chamber of Commerce. A total of 24 awards were made on 14 blocks included in the drive jointly sponsored by the Chamber and the Council.

Stanley B. Winters, Council president, announced the formation of 13 new block branches in the past year, bringing the total to 15, a development which he described as "probably without parallel in the entire country, considering it was done by volunteers."

Louis Pitts, chairman of the Council's public safety committee, detailed a program worked out between Council leaders and Police Director Joseph Sagar, which aims at promoting better public relations between police officials and Clinton Hill residents. Pitts said that a committee of officers from the 5th precinct and Council members would be set up to study problems as they arise, and that rank and file patrolmen would

be invited to block-branch meetings to become better acquainted with residents.

Mrs. Mildred Helms, a vice-president of the Council, reported that the City had closed 13 illegal rooming houses in the past year and was now processing complaints against 25 others. She praised these efforts as a "forward step," but warned that new ones were coming to the Council's attention almost daily.

James A. Paeley, executive director of the Urban League of Essex County, conference chairman, urged vigilance by Council members towards their responsibilities. "It is not always the laws or agencies which are at fault when things seem to be going wrong," he said. "Citizens will get exactly what they put into efforts for betterment, including code-enforcement and community self-help programs."

Musical entertainment for the conference was provided by groups directed by John Coppock and Miss Dorothy Schneider, teachers at South Side, while volunteers from the P.T.A. served refreshments. Of fifteen roundtable discussion groups, five centered on housing, education, welfare, recreation, and social patterns, while the rest dealt generally with varied questions. As one participant said in his post-conference evaluation report, "I learned a great deal, but I could have gone on talking for another hour!"

For further information on the work of the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council contact: Stanley B. Winters, 26 Shanley Avenue, Newark 8, N. J.

### NEWARK AGAIN PRAISED IN NATIONAL MAGAZINE

The national magazine, MAYOR AND MANAGER, on June 8th is publishing as its feature story an article on Mayor Leo P. Carlin and Group Relations in Newark.

The cover photograph shows Mayor Carlin receiving a Brotherhood Award from Mrs. Marion Merrill of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations. The article was written by Dan Anthony, director of the Commission, at the request of the editors of MAYOR AND MANAGER when they learned of the extensive Survey of Changing Neighborhoods taking place in Newark, N. J.

## New Corporation Will Aid Open-Occupancy Housing

Money and advice for developers of new integrated housing will be provided by a national corporation now in formation as "a business venture with a social goal."

Modern Community Developers, Inc., proposes to interest large investors to help finance open-occupancy housing projects throughout the country on a business basis. Organized by builder Morris Milgram, it is based on the successful financial experience of backers who invested \$110,000 in his integrated Concord Park development.

Fifteen thousand shares of stock in the corporation are to be issued at \$100 per share for a total stock sale of \$1,500,000. The corporation will begin business operations when \$250,000 has been subscribed. In early April, about one-half this amount had been reached.

The corporation's Board of Directors, now in formation, includes Frank C. Montero, Mrs. Marietta Yare, Morton S. Grossman, David H. Seall and Albert Sprague Coolidge.

Milgram reports growing interest throughout the country in open-occupancy housing. During the past year he was called on for consultation by builders and citizen groups in 22 cities. In almost every case, interested persons expressed a need for information and assistance on special problems of site selection, financing and marketing. Financing appeared the most serious block, he reports.

Modern Community Developers proposes to lend to builders of integrated housing a portion of the capital they need on good security. It will also offer management services and other assistance on a contract basis.

The corporation is being set up as a commercial rather than a non-profit venture, Milgram says, because of his belief that integrated housing can succeed on a wide basis only if it repeatedly is shown to be commercially practical.

For further information contact: Modern Community Developers, 84 Nassau Street, Princeton, New Jersey.

(Reprint from *Trends in Housing*, March-April, 1958.)

## Summer Workshops on Human Relations

The Mayor's Commission on Group Relations has been accepting applications for the annual Summer Human Relations workshops held at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey and the Encampment for Citizenship at Riverdale, New York and Berkeley, California.

The Rutgers' workshops, Community Leadership in Intergroup Relations, July 13-19, and the advanced Modern Trends in Intergroup Relations, July 20-26, are sponsored by the State Division Against Discrimination, National Conference of Christians and Jews and Rutgers University. The Community Leadership Workshop is designed for those "persons who wish to improve their understanding of the problems confronting them in the area of intergroup relations and to learn up-to-date techniques useful to their solution".

The Modern Trends Workshop is an advanced course designed for those who have had previous workshop experience or extensive work in intergroup relations.

## Integrated Housing Sells in New Jersey

A new open-occupancy housing development in Princeton, New Jersey, has sold 19 houses—13 to whites and 6 to Negroes—in the two months since it opened, while sales in nearly all-white developments were at a standstill, reports Morris Milgram, pioneer developer of integrated housing.

Milgram is Executive Vice-President of Princeton Housing Associates, which is building the development of about 40 homes ranging in price from \$17,000 to \$35,000.

Unlike Concord Park, Milgram's earlier development, where heavy initial response from Philadelphia's large Negro community forced establishment of a quota to preserve integration, the Princeton development has found no need to control occupancy to achieve its present 2:1 ratio of white to Negro families. Milgram feels that the nature of the community indicates that there will be no need for quotas, and that this situation may be true in many other areas.

(Reprint from *Trends in Housing*, March-April, 1958.)

in the community. Both workshops are open to all citizens interested in the problems of community relations today. The Mayor's Commission on Group Relations provides scholarship aid for city employees and Newark residents.

The Encampment for Citizenship is a six week educational program conducted at the Fieldston School in Riverdale, N. Y., June 29-August 9, and the University of California, Berkeley, California, June 22 to August 2. The Encampment is designed for young adults, 18-23 years old "to develop informed and responsible citizens and to provide academic and personal contact with the ideas and people who contribute to the richness and texture present in America today". Students are selected to represent every section of the United States and several other countries. The Encampment is sponsored by the American Ethical Union. Some scholarship aid is available for qualified students from the Encampment for Citizenship and the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations.

All Newark residents interested in any of these workshops are asked to apply immediately at the office of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations, Room 214, City Hall, ME 3-6390, Ext. 281.

## Housing in Chicago

Housing, as always, is Chicago's overwhelming need and worry.

It bears repeating that human relations in the metropolitan area will never be satisfactory until there is adequate shelter for all people at prices they can pay and until racial and religious factors no longer affect either property transfers or mortgage availability.

During the year Mr. John Warner of the Great Lakes Mortgage Company assumed the chairmanship of the Commission's Housing Committee. The interest of men of such competence and responsibility is what Chicago desperately needs.

We have two housing markets when we need only one. So long as we have two markets—and so long as non-white citizens are compelled to buy at prices and terms different from white purchasers—

(Continued on Page 4, Column 2)

## NEW YORK CITY LEADS NATION IN HOUSING INTEGRATION

The nation's first law forbidding racial and religious discrimination in private housing went into effect on April 1.

As the municipal measure became law an educational campaign was begun to gain community cooperation in achieving the act's objective—a free market in housing.

The Commission on Intergroup Relations, municipal unit designated to administer the law, began the distribution of 25,000 copies of its first educational brochure, "Fair Play in Housing for Every One."

The brochure contained a statement from Mayor Wagner which declared:

*"As a matter of equality, as well as law, all New Yorkers must have the right to bargain for their shelter in a freely open, competitive housing market."*

Speaking on a radio program on March 30, Dr. Alfred J. Marrow, chairman of the Intergroup Relations Commission, said that for those who violate the new law the maximum penalty—a year in jail—would be sought in cases where "the violation is clearly deliberate."

The NAACP was an important factor in securing passage of the private housing act, which was fought vigorously by organized real estate and commerce groups. Support for the measure was expressed just as vigorously by various civic and religious bodies, and by the NAACP.

### Some 1,700,000 Housing Units Covered

The new law makes it illegal to refuse to rent private housing to anyone because of religion, race or color. The only exception is one and two family homes, which are exempt except when they are in developments of ten or more. It is estimated that approximately 1,700,000 housing units are covered by the act.

The Commission on Intergroup Relations plans to send out 150,000 to 200,000 copies of its first brochure—to landlords, civic organizations, consumer groups and parent-teacher associations.

A 12-man review panel will take up housing complaints found valid by the Intergroup Relations Commission after a failure of conciliation by the Commission. Members of the panel are expected to be designated by the Mayor within a week.

First steps charted by the Commission for its initial administration of the law include the following:

• Work with private agencies and organizations to promote acceptance of the law's objectives.

• Technical and consultant services to property owners, if desired, to assist them in compliance.

• Research, study and consultation with experts to develop the best methods of education, conference, conciliation, mediation and persuasion to eliminate the discrimination now prohibited.

• Informational materials for use by real estate groups, schools, civic organizations and the public to bring about a better understanding of the principles of open occupancy housing.

An allocation of \$385,000 to the Intergroup Relations Commission will enable the bureau to increase its staff of 20 to about 50 persons.

### Some Basic Questions On Integrated Housing and The Law

The New York City Commission on Intergroup Relations published an educational brochure, "Fair Play in Housing for Every One", which explains the Fair Housing Practices Law and answers some basic questions concerning housing and intergroup relations. Here are a few of these questions and statements taken from the booklet:

1. Why do we have a Fair Housing Practices Law in New York City?

*The Council of the City of New York has found that discrimination in private housing constitutes a danger to all the inhabitants of the city. It creates tension among our citizens, it forces certain groups to live in overcrowded, unhealthy and unsafe housing—even if they can afford better housing—and it costs the taxpayer huge sums of money to provide the extra city services to cope with the evils growing out of these conditions.*

*To safeguard the welfare of our City the Fair Housing Practices Law assures all New Yorkers an equal opportunity to bargain for a place to live, regardless of their race, religion or nationality.*

2. What kind of housing is covered by the Fair Housing Practices Law?

*All private multiple dwelling (build-*

*ings with three or more apartments) and new one and two-family houses which are built in developments of 10 or more houses. Certain housing owned or operated by religious, denominational, charitable or educational institutions is exempted; also, rooms subject to a tenancy of an apartment in which he or members of his family reside are exempted.*

3. Does the Fair Housing Law force the landlord or manager to rent, lease or sell to anyone?

*No. A property manager has every right to maintain residential standards as to credit rating, income, character, family composition or other qualifying requirements for admission to a given house or development, as long as these same standards are used for everyone regardless of race, color, religion or national origin.*

4. Isn't it true that the admission of minority families will cause property values to decline?

*No. Scientific studies and practical experience in large private apartment developments in the city have shown that property values remain the same or even increase when minority families move into a neighborhood, so long as accepted residential standards and services continue to be maintained in the house and the neighborhood by both property owners and tenants.*

5. It seems that neighborhoods and buildings where minorities live become overcrowded, run down, and poorly maintained. Won't this happen whenever they live?

*No. Race, as such, has nothing to do with the upkeep of residential property, but housing discrimination does. Overcrowding and the failure to maintain sound property standards are the causes of housing blight regardless of the race or nationality of the occupants. However, housing discrimination forces many minority families to overcrowd housing that for the most part is already in poor condition when they move in.*

*According to a census survey taken in 1954, three out of every four substandard apartment units in New York City were occupied by white families. On the other hand, many minority families living in New York City occupy*

*(Continued on Page 4, Column 1)*

## MORTGAGE EXPERIENCE SHOWS RACE "IRRELEVANT", BANKER REPORTS

The President of the country's largest savings bank recently reiterated that in his bank's experience with mortgage loans "the color or ethnic origin of the borrower is irrelevant."

President Earl B. Schwoist of the Boscary Savings Bank, which holds more home mortgages than any savings bank in the country, reported on his institution's experience with "a substantial number and amount of loans covering minority as well as integrated housing."

"It is my firm conviction that the soundness of any mortgage loan depends on the condition and value of the property, its location and the credit of the borrower, and that the color or ethnic origin of the borrower is irrelevant."

"Over the years the rate of delinquency on mortgage loans and the day-to-day problems of collection have naturally fluctuated to some degree with the change in economic conditions. To my knowledge, there has been no greater rate of delinquency, nor have the problems of collection been greater, with respect to mortgaged properties occupied interracially or by minority groups, than with respect to properties occupied by whites."

### Some Basic Questions

*(Continued from Page 3, Column 1)*  
good housing in which they maintain sound standards and, in many cases, improve the property.

6. Don't I have the right to choose my neighbors?

Yes, to a degree. You certainly have a right to live in a place where you think you will enjoy your neighbors. But this right is not limited to white persons or any other particular group. It is a right for all citizens. As a tenant you have the right to safety, sanitation, decency and privacy. It is also the responsibility of the tenant not to infringe upon the rights of others.

Schwoist's statement contradicts a footnote in the March issue of builder publication *House and Home* alleging that "mortgage delinquency among Negroes is still worse than the delinquency among white families."

Schwoist's comments were made in a letter to a citizens' committee in Grand Rapids, Mich., which is considering building an open-occupancy housing development.

*(Reprint from Trends in Housing, March-April, 1958.)*

### Housing in Chicago

*(Continued from Page 2, Column 2)*

just a long will we have the spread of segregation.

Last year at this time we said: "We need a clear and definitive City housing policy, one which is at once practical and economic, and at the same time blessed with some vision of what human relations should be a generation hence."

We still need that policy and strong action under it. It seems odd and foolish to be planning so many major redevelopments and spending so much on them, while paying so little attention to the most deadly threat to the City's future, the growth of voluntary, residential segregation imperils education, economics, and racial harmony.

*Excerpta from speech delivered by Francis W. McPeck, Executive Director, Chicago Commission on Human Relations at 12th Annual Awards in Human Relations Luncheon December 10, 1957.*

### June Commission Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations will take place in Room 100, City Hall at 3 p.m. on June 18th. The public is invited to attend all meetings of the Commission.

### SELECTED READING

Burton, Milton L., editor. *American Minorities, 1952*. Repl. "A sampling of the literature by social scientists on the relations between racial, religious and ethnic groups in the United States."

Frank, Lawrence Frank. *Italian in America: A social study and history, 1932*. Expansion Press. "Italian people in America from the first arrivals to the present."

Rosen, Carl T. *On South to Sarnow, 1957*. Random House. "A prize-winning journalist evaluates the progress of integration since the historic Supreme Court decision."

Butler, F. E., and Rudy, Wendell H. *Human relations: comments and cases, Harper, 1957*.

Cases are chosen to teach skill in solving human relations problems which exist in everyday interactions between men in four-to-five groups.

Boat, Robert. *Progress against prejudice, Friendship Press, 1957*.

Survey of what churches are doing to better intergroup relations.

Golden, Joseph. *Social control of Negro-white intermarriage, Social Forces, March, 1958*.

Various racial controls which prevent or inhibit Negro-white intermarriage.

### First Case Settled Under N.Y.C. Housing Law

Dr. Alfred J. Marrow, chairman, announced that the first complaint filed under the Fair Housing Practices Law had been settled amicably.

The complaint, which was filed April 3rd, two days after the effective date of the law, was closed Friday, May 2nd, with the agreement by the property managers involved to accept the complainant's application for a lease.

The complaint charged that the applicant had been rejected by the directors of a Manhattan cooperative apartment because of his religion. An investigation by the Commission indicated that the applicant met the standards of occupancy as set forth by the property manager for the cooperative dwelling. Without resort to formal hearing procedures the property corporation agreed to reconsider the application.

Dr. Marrow said the Commission was informed that the Board of Directors of the cooperative had agreed to accept the application.

### MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON GROUP RELATIONS

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